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Near East/North Africa Report

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NEAR EAST/NORTH AFRICA REPORT

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ALGERIA

BRIEFS

TLEMCEM WATER SUPPLY--The urban modernization plan devotes numerous projects to hydraulics. The town is supplied with drinking water almost exclusively by the Meffrouch dam with a total capacity of 19 million cubic meters coming at the same time from a large underground layer and from contributions of the EL-Nachef wadi. It should be recalled that this dam, dating from 1949, made possible the first experimentations with prefabricated structures of this type. The town of Tlemcen presently receives 220 liters per second, a quantity adequate until 1986, taking into account the expansion of the town and of the neighboring industrial zone which already covers 250 ha. Seven reservoirs with a storage capacity of nearly 13,000 m³ are almost completed: pipe laying is being completed. [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French 24 Aug 79 p 2321] 8696

REABSORPTION OF EMIGREES--Permanent reintegration in Algeria is the greatest desire of workers emigrated abroad according to an article of the daily EL MOUDJAHID in connection with the governorate of Bejai. A tenth of the population of that governorate lives abroad and the shipping line Marseille-Bejaia started by CNAN (Algerian National Cie of Navigation) in 1977 registered 20,000 passengers last year. Candidates for reinstatement in Algeria meet with three kinds of difficulties' adjustment of the children who, schooled abroad, are totally ignorant of Algerian realities, employment demands of which the village could satisfy only 20 percent; lastly and most important, housing where programs are clearly insufficient. Many emigrants claim building sites from their communities, taken out of land reserves; then they have to find cement, insufficient allocations of which (100 bags per claimant) led to some black market activities. Examples have shown that employment offers coupled with a promise of housing find ready takers. [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French 24 Aug 79 p 2321] 8696

ORAN WATER SUPPLY--We announced recently (MTM of 3 Aug p 2152) that the water supply of the city of Oran was in the process of being assured. Presently the township disposes of a capacity of 175,000 m³/day, including the petro-chemical zone of Arzew which consumes 28,000 m³. The rapid growth of the town has constantly required outside water resources. After the water supplied from the Beni Bakdel dam in 1952, there was in 1976 that from the Fergoug dam of which 45 percent is needed for the industries of

the Arzew zone. The new resources envisaged will come from the Sidi Abdelli (Tlemcen) and Bel Attar dams. The resources of the governorate stem from three hydrogeological complexes: the Bredeak layer, the largest, that of Murdjadjo, incompletely exploited, which is soon to be the object of four supplementary tappings; lastly that of Trois Hassi whose briny waters are only suitable for agriculture. [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French 24 Aug 79 p 2321] 8696

TLEMCEEN NATURAL GAS--The supply of natural gas to the whole of the Tlemcen governorate progresses and could be complete by 1982. After the 5000 households of the chief town, all soon to be connected, the town of Beni-Saf and its 3000 households will be equipped in September and the towns of Maghnia and Chazaouet before the end of the year. Those of Nadroma and Renchi will follow as well as the industrial areas situated in the region. However, for security reasons some old districts have not been included in the programs of operations. [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French 24 Aug 79 p 2321] 8696

RELATIONS WITH SWITZERLAND--The Swiss Government on 22 August approved the nomination of Mr Rachid Haddad, a high official, as Algerian ambassador to Switzerland, a post vacant for 5 years. The spokesman of the government added that the Swiss authorities are happy over the normalization of relations between the two countries estranged for some years by the FLN war treasure affair. This political, judicial and financial imbroglio which lasted 15 years came to a climax with the recall of the Algerian ambassador in 1974. New negotiations conducted in Bern last April led to a political solution opening the way to restoration of diplomatic relations between Algeria and Switzerland. [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French 24 Aug 79 p 2322] 8696

TRADE WITH JAPAN--The economic bulletin of the Algerian Board of Trade publishes a study on Algerian-Japanese trade from which we extract the following data: From a modest level (less than 200 millions of Algerian dinars) up to 1973 the trade volume grew rapidly: 638 million in 1974, 1026 in 1975, 1308 in 1976 and 1881 in 1977. But the constant Algerian deficit also grew during the same period, Algerian exports to Japan only once exceeding 150 million. Algeria imports more than 20 products from Japan, almost completely consisting of finished and semi-finished goods: engines, boilers, mechanical apparatus and devices, navigation material, cast-iron, iron and steel. Algerian exports are foremost oils and mineral fuels (99.3 percent of the value in 1978), a few chemical products and sometimes diverse articles (their value is negligible). Algeria hopes, however, to redress this imbalance by intensifying its sales, banking on the Japanese scheme of preferences. On the other hand it makes use of Japanese engineering which ranked sixth for the period 1962-1976 after France, FRG, Italy, USSR and Great Britain. Contracts of nearly 1700 millions of dinars deal in the first place with hydrocarbons and in the second place with cement and marine equipment for CNAN (Algerian National Cie of Navigation). [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French 24 Aug 79 p 2322] 8696

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COOPERATION WITH BENIN--The Algeria-Benin Commission, announced in our 2 preceding numbers (MTM of 17 and 24 Aug. pp 2266 and 2334), met in Algiers from 19 to 21 Aug to study how to strengthen the cooperation between the 2 countries in compliance with the bilateral agreements of 1973 and 1976. Algeria already buys foodstuffs from Benin and sells to it products of its industry and hydrocarbons. A mixed Cie of marine navigation, Cobeman, carries out cargo shipping to various European ports for Benin. Besides, 300 Benin youths attend classes at the University of Algiers or at technical institutes. The two countries agreed to intensify and diversify their trade exchanges and their economic relations. The first session of the mixed Commission was held in 1976; the last meeting of the experts took place in July 1977 at Cotonou. The impending creation of a mixed Board of Trade was decided upon. [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French 24 Aug 79 p 2322] 8696

SONATRACH: PLASTICS--Recently Sonatrach (Algerian National Cie for research, production transportation and marketing of hydrocarbons) announced that, since its plastics plant of Skikda is now in production, it is able to deliver polyvinyl chloride (PVC) in diverse forms as well as soda, chlorine and Na hypochlorite. Regional agencies at Algiers, Oran and Annaba are entitled to take orders. [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French 24 Aug 79 p 2322] 8696

SMALL, MEDIUM BUSINESSES IN ANNABA--The rebound in economic activity of the Annaba governorate expresses itself by a noticeable development of small and medium businesses, thus supplementing the big industrial complexes of the region. In the frame of the 4-year plan the governorate benefited from 7 PMI projects (82 million dinars), 5 construction projects (88 million) and 1 warehousing operation (65 million). The whole is financed by long term credits granted by the African Bank of Development (BAD) and outside credits guaranteed by that bank. Nine other PMI projects are in the process of completion, mostly in sectors of building materials, carpentry and wood-work. Manpower is recruited and trained locally: 760 permanent jobs have been created. Annaba bought 90 buses (30 million dinars) and plans the creation of a car park. Lastly, the national organization for Algerian blind people organizes a sorgho utilization unit (74.000 t of straw a year) and a broom manufacture unit (600.000 brooms a year) giving work to more than 100 handicapped people. [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French 24 Aug 79 p 2322] 8696

CHAZAOUET HARBOUR--Important reinforcement work of the jetty is in progress at Chazaouet harbour, on the extreme western tip of Algeria. It involves mostly the stone bed of the North jetty, insufficiently made use of on account of problems of access and outlets towards the hinterland; a project of a new road branch, in process of realization, will take care of this obstacle. Sonatram (National Co of marine works) after building a layer against erosion will pour some 26.000 t of prefabricated blocks into the harbor itself in the coming weeks. [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French 24 Aug 79 p 2322] 8969

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CULTURAL, SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION WITH USSR--A protocol of cultural and scientific cooperation for the 2 years 1979-1980 was signed on 16 August in Moscow between Algeria and USSR. The new protocol foresees the establishment of large bilateral exchanges in the domains of art and culture. Thus, in 1979, Algeria will receive the Operatic troupe of Everan and in 1980 the troupe of the celebrated Moscow circus. An important place is given to cooperation in the domain of training of Algerian specialists and of Soviet aid in public health. A large group of Soviet teachers will continue its educational activity in the universities, the institutes and the training centers of Algiers, Annaba, Bourmedes and other towns. Numerous Algerians will go to the USSR to do their graduate studies, take their higher education teaching diploma or to undertake a probationary training course. [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French 24 Aug 79 p 2322] 8696

DEVELOPMENT OF STEPPE IN TLEMCCEN--A meeting held on 14 August in the seat of the Tlemcen governorate has evaluated the agricultural and forestry situation in the region. Two thirds of the agricultural investment programs are taken up with stock breeding, the intensification of cereal culture and the creation of a professional training center. In forestry 40 fires since the beginning of the year destroyed 585 ha of forests, 214 ha of which were alfa. Nursery, infrastructure and restocking work is in progress in accordance with the special program and the second 4 year-plan; the study of the hillside basins of the 2 dams of Sidi Abdelli and Sekkak is complete. Large programs of the same 4 year-plan are on the way to realization: DRS (Defense and Restoration of the soil) on 13.000 ha; reconstitution of 10.000 ha of massive forests (forest of Slissens); management of steppes by reafforestation of 1.650 ha of lands around stock breeding cooperatives and by tree planting at waterholes. A governorate agency recently created, Emifor, specializing in forestry work is in charge of the latter task. [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French 24 Aug 79 p 2322] 8696

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IRAN

IRAN SEEN RULED BY DERVISHES BENT ON HOLY WAR

Paris VALEURS ACTUELLES in French 10 Sep 79 pp 27-29

[Article by Michel Gurfinkiel]

[Text] The members of the Majlis-e-Khebragan, Iran's Consultative Assembly, have not managed to reach agreement on article 15 of the new constitution. Should the Islamic Republic be defined as a state founded on the sovereignty of the people? Some deputies are hesitating about this, which seems too tainted by Western thinking to them. They would rather talk in terms of "divine sovereignty."

The other articles of the constitution have presented fewer difficulties. According to the first draft submitted to the Majlis, the republic was to be governed by a president with extremely broad powers, but who would still be responsible to the religious hierarchy. The deputies unanimously voted to avoid such a division of responsibility; the ayatollahs will directly assume the functions of chief of state, acting through a supreme elected council in Qom, the holy city of the Imam Khomeyni, by a college of 340 mullahs.

Of the 71 members of the present Consultative Assembly, there are 53 doctors of Koranic law and 18 lay persons. The Ayatollah Taleqani, a deputy from Tehran, considered "liberal" or even "leftist," is not playing much of a part in the debates. He is less familiar than some of his colleagues with the details of rites and jurisprudence. And the Imam Khomeyni expressly pointed out in one of his works: "In a self-respecting Islamic government, the parliament must be replaced by a religious planning council, which will transmit to each ministry the Islamic laws affecting it." So for Khomeyni, politics no longer exists as such, but is absorbed into theology.

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While the Majlis, located in the old palace of the imperial senate of the Pahlevi regime, continues its work, Iran is falling apart. On 3 September, government troops took over Mahabad, a small city which had served as provisional capital for the Kurdish autonomists; but the Kurds have fallen back into their mountain strongholds; they are well armed and supported by their brothers in Iraq, and are determined to wage an unyielding guerrilla warfare. In Kuzestan; the oil-producing province in the south with a Sunnite Arab population, violence has multiplied.

Iran is ruined. There are 4 million people out of work. Work has stopped in one place after another. While the American, French, and British industrialists and technicians were forced to leave the country in February, the Germans and Japanese, who were better treated by the Islamic authorities in Tehran, are now following in their footsteps, of their own accord, as they are worried about profits.

Mr Nashiro Amaya, deputy minister of international trade and industry of Japan, one of the key men of the economy of his country, has just gone to Iran to discuss the future of such extremely important projects as the chemical complex of Bandar Khomeyni. The atmosphere in these negotiations was not one of optimism.

Iran is still eating, but poorly. The consumption of spoiled foods is causing epidemics. The Ministry of Health reported 200 cases of cholera in early September, but some observers say they should be talking in terms of thousands of cases.

The United States has decided to resume its aid to Iran, thus providing a breathing space, or perhaps even a lasting consolidation for what some State Department people are calling "the crazy republic of dervishes." President Carter explained:

"We do not at all approve of the policy of the Imam Khomeyni, but Iran is one of our major oil suppliers. We have to remember that."

In its first concrete sign of support for this "major supplier," Washington shipped fuel to Iran. As in the last months of the monarchist regime, the production of the Persian Gulf wells has been disrupted by strikes and sabotage. The second type of aid: arms shipments.

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Mr Carter's attitude calls for two comments. First of all, if they are to join forces with the imam, although he doesn't respect human rights, why did they sacrifice the Shah Mohamed Reza in the name of the same human rights? Secondly, does the White House believe that gratitude is one of Khomeyni's virtues?

Editions Hallier has just published in a green cover some extracts of the main doctrinal works of the imam. Entitled "Principles of the Ayatollah Khomeyni," this anthology may give too much space to some regulations on ritual purity that will certainly surprise or shock the western reader, but which do not necessarily have in themselves any political significance. But there are other passages which form the "Mein Kampf" of the new master of Iran.

According to imam Khomeyni, who interprets literally the obligation of "Jihad" or holy war, "it is the duty of all Moslems of the world, in all Moslem countries, to wage an Islamic political revolution until the final victory." Therefore, "all governments not based on pure Islamic principles, and which are thus corrupt and corrupting, must be overthrown."

The imam is not an Iranian patriot. He believes only in "the nation of Islam, one and indivisible, which has been seduced by the maneuvers of the imperialists and by despotic and ambitious leaders." Only a "universal Islamic government" will be able to fight against "the Jews, Christians, and materialists."

The present Moslem leaders, kings and presidents, may keep their positions if they show themselves "obedient and worthy of confidence" in respect to the world Islamic revolution.

There is no doubt that this theory, which Ruhollah Khomeyni formulated towards 1970 when he was exiled in Iraq, is the basis for his present domestic and foreign policy. Emissaries from Tehran tried to foment troubles in the emirate of Bahrein on the other side of the Persian Gulf in mid-August in order to establish an "Islamic state" there.

By supporting 'Arafat's PLO, the imam wants to harness for his own use and for that of his revolution the most powerful terrorist organization in the Middle East. Against Israel, but especially against the "kings and presidents" of Saudi Arabia or Egypt--in case they are not "obedient" enough.

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The Imam Khomeyni is today using U.S. aid as he used to accept the asylum that France offered him at Neauphle-le-Chateau. But in his eyes, both French and Americans simply do not exist.

The world is divided into two camps, the House of Islam and the Nation of Unbelief. A person who does not belong to one belongs to the other: "The holy war means the conquest of non-Moslem territories. It may be that it will be declared after the appointment of an Islamic government worthy of the name, under the direction of the imam or by his order. It will then be the duty of every man of legal age and fit for service to volunteer in this war of conquest, whose final goal is to make Koranic law reign from one end of the earth to the other."

The man in Washington who encouraged President Carter to abandon the shah and support Khomeyni's revolution, former assistant secretary of state George Ball, also seems to have played a role in the discreet contacts between Washington and the PLO. In any case, he spoke openly in the magazine, U.S. NEWS, in favor of recognizing Arafat's organization. Another master of American diplomacy, former secretary of state Henry Kissinger, just said in his striking statement on the security of the West:

"I don't understand how we can at the same time encourage both Egypt and the PLO."

The same question holds for the Gulf region: is it possible at the same time to aid the holy war and to protect the oil wells?

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IRAQ

SYRIAN CONNECTION IN RECENT COUP ATTEMPT EXAMINED

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic 24-30 Aug 79 pp 16-17

[Article: "Abolition of Precautionary Laws and Call for General Elections; Baghdad's Spring to Begin at End of Year"]

[Text] The recent plot was a passing cloud in Iraq's summer. This is what they say in Baghdad. But the important thing is that the Iraqi capital is breathing as of this moment the breezes of the spring which Saddam Husayn's leadership is bringing Iraq with its recent measures for the release of detainees and for general amnesty and with its preparations for abolishing the precautionary laws to pave the way for general elections.

The attention of visitors to Baghdad these days is drawn by the return of the picture of former President Ahmad Hasan al-Bakr to occupy its official place side by side with the picture of President Saddam Husayn in the government offices, the public sector, the headquarters of the Socialist Arab Ba'th Party and in the unions.

When a number of journalists and wire service correspondents who had come last week to cover the measures for the release of all political prisoners of various inclinations in accordance with the amnesty decisions issued by the Revolution Command Council--when these journalists and correspondents inquired about this particular phenomenon, the brief answer was: These are the instructions of the party leadership and of the state presidency.

During the special plenary regional congress which was convened to hear the testimony of Mashhadi on the recent plot, President Saddam Husayn noticed that the picture of President al-Bakr had disappeared from its place on the walls of al-Khuld Hall. So he interrupted the congress proceedings and asked the official in charge of the hall about the picture of the leader father. When he learned that the removal of the picture was no more than a protocol procedure followed when a new president takes over his duties and responsibilities, President Saddam Husayn demanded that the picture be restored to its place and that it continue to be hung there, pointing out that a decision to this effect had already been issued by the Revolution Command Council on the basis that even though al-Bakr

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left the top position of responsibility in the party and the state, he continues to be the leader father and that even though the conditions, especially the health conditions, have led to the change of the person in the top position of responsibility, the state and the party will continue to march in a new form on the same path without any change.

This is why, according to President Abu-'Adi [Husayn], the struggler father Abu-Haytham [al-Bakr] will always remain with us even though he has left the place and the responsibility.

Pan-Arab and National Course Continues

Thus, the issue of Abu-Haytham's picture provides the observer of Iraqi events a key to see, diagnose and analyze. This is because the continued hanging of the picture reflects the determination of the party and of the state in Iraq to continue to adopt the same principled lines of the local, pan-Arab and international policy approved by the Regional Congress of 1977.

However, the retirement of President al-Bakr and the Revolution Council's and Regional Command's unanimous election of Saddam Husayn as head of the state and of the Revolution Council and as party secretary means changing the form of the leadership action which used to rest on "the actual presence of a two-man leadership" into "one-man leadership."

Even though the form of "two-man leadership" continued to be, thanks to the comradeship and personal relations between al-Bakr and Saddam, single and united in its action and reaction to the fundamental issues, there were those who tried in various ways from within and from outside to stir the waters between the two persons of the leadership with the aim of making some small personal gains, of diverting the course of the party's march or of sabotaging the state's instrument. This is something that required joint and doubled efforts from al-Bakr and Saddam to expose it to the party and to the masses so that it may not create negative effects in any position.

By necessity, this situation was reflected in the slow pace of adopting and implementing decisions. Perhaps this slowness is what motivated President al-Bakr more than once to exhort Saddam Husayn, his deputy and his partner in the command, to take the responsibility alone, along with the Revolution Command Council and the party's Regional Command. But Saddam Husayn turned down persistently al-Bakr's repeated requests. He even concealed these requests from the Revolution Command Council and from the [Regional] Command until President al-Bakr himself brought up the issue at the end of last June during one of the special meetings held to study the discussions concerning the Iraqi-Syrian unity and to draw up plans for forming its command when he told the conferees: "Comrades, exclude me from your calculations for the unity formations. It is my right to rest now that I have reached this limit. I nominate my comrade Saddam."

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The evaluation of a number of the party leaderships of the serious nature of the plot planned by Mashhadi, Muhammad 'Ayish, Muhammad Mahjub, Ghanim 'Abd-al-Jalil and 'Adnan Husayn is based on the fact that the plot sought to break the line of continuity in the policy of Iraq as a party, a state and a national force opposed to Camp David and to prevent the transformation of the "two-man leadership"--on the insistence of President al-Bakr--into the form of the "one-man leadership" of Saddam Husayn through the revolution and party command so as to free this leadership of numerous shackles and intrinsic considerations.

A number of party and state leaders point out the fact that the plot was contained at the party and the security levels with a quick decision that led to exposing the plot leadership and its most prominent aids and to purging the party altogether of this plotting leadership. This is why the plotting turned into a mere transient incident in the party's march--an incident that reveals some inevitable flaws and negative aspects in a party whose membership exceeds 1.25 million members.

To prove this fact, these leaders point out that the interaction of continuity and of the quick decisiveness by the one-man command is what foiled the attempt to obstruct implementation of the leadership's decree to pardon the political detainees and to open the doors of society before them as free citizens not hampered by any shackles. For the first time in Iraq's history, there isn't a single political prisoner, except for those convicted in the recent plot and not affected by the amnesty because the decree had been issued before the plot was discovered.

The leadership's continuity and quick decisiveness is inclined toward exerting efforts to establish a fundamental democratic right, namely that no citizen violating the law should stand before anybody other than his natural and ordinary judge. This means abolishing in the near future the precautionary measures that were adopted to protect the revolution and also means, consequently, the supremacy of the law. This means that the Revolution Court's powers will be reduced to the narrowest limits so that this court may have no power except over serious cases pertaining to the state's supreme security and referred to this court by a special decree from the Revolution Council.

Call for General Elections

Within this framework, the party and revolution leadership has decided that before this year ends, the call for general elections must be made so that the national council may come as a reflection of the masses' legislative will.

The investigation in the recent plot has revealed that 'Adnan Husayn had agreed with 'Ayish and Mashhadi to work to obstruct implementation of the Revolution Council's decision to hold general elections so that al-Bakr's and Saddam's leadership may appear as a leadership that does not respect its word and does not fulfill its promises. Agreement was reached among

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the plotters that 'Adnan Husayn, the man entrusted with preparing the national council's draft bill, would create numerous legal problems to prevent discussing and approving the bill, thus keeping the whole thing a mere promise and slogan.

Some high-ranking officials say that President Saddam Husayn and some members of the Revolution Command Council noticed this [attitude] but that their observation was made with goodwill. President Saddam and these members asked 'Adnan Husayn repeatedly to expedite preparation of the bill and he promised to do so but never fulfilled his promise.

A number of the Revolution Command Council again brought up the issue in one of the latest meetings of the Council. On a proposal from President Saddam Husayn, a constitutional committee of experts led by Tariq 'Aziz, one of the Revolution Command Council members, was selected and entrusted with the task of familiarizing itself with the previous bills and of drawing up a bill that can be implemented before the end of the year. The committee did actually complete its task this week and the Revolution Command Council has decided to discuss its work at a meeting to be held before the end of August and to set the date of the elections before the end of the year.

The Revolution Command Council members stress the continuation of the pan-Arab struggle line to which Iraq has adhered vis-a-vis Camp David by continuing to support the Baghdad summit, by developing this summit's capabilities from the defense to the offense and by not permitting the plot to weaken Iraq's commitment--made at the Baghdad conference--or to curtail Iraq's pan-Arab efforts vis-a-vis the U.S.-Israeli-Egyptian alliance.

This is why Iraq has been eager not to reveal the name of the state mentioned by the plotters. This eagerness will continue. Some people interested in the party's policy add that President Saddam Husayn was eager to include this clear statement in his first message to the Arab heads of state, declaring that all the commitments undertaken by Iraq, even toward this particular state, will be carried out.

Thus, continuity in the one-man leadership was the target of the plot which wanted to prevent President al-Bakr from stepping down so that the plotters may gain more time and, consequently, may obstruct the transfer of power from al-Bakr to Saddam Husayn. Such a transfer would mean continuity and this continuity means perpetuating the relations among the various forces in the interest of the revolution as represented by al-Bakr and Saddam, even though the two men differ in style.

In an uncalculated confrontation with this point, according to a well-informed source, the hidden was revealed and the plotters trapped themselves. Some sources have cited Mashhadi as saying that al-Bakr did not step down because he was sick but because he was "upset." When his colleagues asked him to explain his serious words, Mashhadi refused to do so

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and began making statements which the Revolution Command Council considered a sabotaging act.

Saddam Husayn Confronts Plotters

At a Council meeting, President Saddam Husayn confronted Mashhadi with his words and told him that he [Husayn] agrees with his colleagues that they are irresponsible words and reach the point of sabotage, especially since Mashhadi reiterated those words outside the Revolution Council. Saddam proposed freezing Mashhadi's membership in the Council and referring Mashhadi to a party investigation, especially since Mashhadi denied his own words repeatedly. Saddam said: "Generally, such a party investigation is our right and yours too. We in the party want to know all the threads you have."

This last phrase was tantamount to the straw that broke the camel's back. Mashhadi collapsed and started to recount the details of an organization plotting against the party, formed with a leadership from within the party and through a political and financial alliance with a foreign state since 1975. The aim of the organization was to shatter the unity of the party and of the state and the revolutionary continuity line. Muhammad 'Ayish, the member of the Revolution Command Council and of the Regional Command, was the main axis of this organization.

Even though President Saddam Husayn had been talking for a time about what he called "the black spot" in 'Ayish's mind and heart, he had not imagined that matters would reach the point where 'Ayish would plot through an independent organization linked to and financed by a foreign side. President Saddam then asked special non-partisan and non-political investigators to investigate the matter carefully. Their investigation produced the same results as the initial partisan investigation. To guarantee accuracy, the investigation took two successive courses: At the start, there was the investigation by the legal agencies concerned and when the investigation reached definite evidence, it was transferred to the second course and all the evidence and proofs were put at the disposal of a partisan investigation committee consisting of members of the Revolution Command Council. This committee is the party that referred the defendants for trial.

In view of the serious role of Muhammad 'Ayish--whom Mashhadi exposed as an active leader of the plot--he was kept under detention at the Revolution Command Council premises. The course of the official and partisan investigation ended with the exposure of movements by 'Adnan Husayn, Muhammad Mahjub and Ghanim 'Abd-al-Jalil. At the outset, President Saddam Husayn and certain members of the Revolution Command Council, including Vice President 'Izzat Ibrahim, refused to believe these results and cast doubts on them. But suddenly an incident took place and tipped the balance in favor of belief and against doubt. After the arrest of Muhammad 'Ayish, Muhammad Mahjub went to visit 'Izzat Ibrahim in his home at night and confided in him: "I may have committed a mistake against the

party and gotten involved with Mashhadi and 'Ayish, but I do not want to die. Please do not execute me. I want to live and serve, even as a street sweeper."

At this point, President Saddam Husayn summoned the Revolution Command Council to an urgent meeting and submitted a report on the confessions of Mashhadi and 'Ayish, saying: "I am afraid, comrades, that the plan of Mashhadi and 'Ayish is to tarnish the largest number possible of the innocent comrades and strugglers. This is why I suggest to all the comrade members of the Revolution Command Council who happened to have in the past months sessions with Mashhadi and 'Ayish in which there was any talk about planning and contacts with a foreign country, about foreign financing and about a leadership other than the party leadership, and not just friendly sessions--I beg these comrades to try to remember everything so that we may block the path in the face of any attempt to soil the innocent."

He added: "If you decide to submit your reports to me personally, it is your right that I keep them confidential or to have them open and presented to the party."

The majority decided that the reports be open. Mahjub, Ghanim and 'Adnan, among others, submitted reports that sounded discordant. These reports speak about planning sessions and about contacts but, at the same time, try to justify without convincing reasons. They conclude their reports by saying that they erred in their direction and movement.

After familiarizing itself with these reports, the Revolution Command Council decided to defend the continuity of its principled policy and defend its legitimate leadership. The Council decided to interrogate the three aforementioned persons at the National Council premises.

Those who have followed up the investigation say that when the matter concerned Ghanim 'Abd-al-Jalil who occupied, in addition to his membership in the Revolution Command Council, the position of director of President Saddam Husayn's office, Abu-'Adi [Saddam] said: "When I was about to familiarize myself with the outcome of the investigation, I prayed to God that 'Abd-al-Jalil be innocent. But I suddenly face the facts and the confessions and my hopes are smashed and I learn, regrettably, that matters reached the point where he photographed some of my office documents like any spy hired for an interest other than that of the party and of the state."

The president's eyes and the eyes of those around him fill up with tears. But Ghassan, a 25-year-old youth who joined the party 15 months ago, says: What happened has happened. It is a wound in the heart but it will not break the party or the revolution. We must persist in our plan at a stronger, faster and more decisive pace.

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Syrian Connection

Insofar as the state whose name was mentioned by the plotters is concerned, it is no longer secret at the Iraqi and Arab levels that the intended state is Syria.

Perhaps the first secret that is no longer a secret is that a Syrian delegation including 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam, the minister of foreign affairs, and Lt Gen Hikmat al-Shihabi, the chief of staff, have paid two visits to Iraq. It is said that the first took place on the 25th of last July and that the delegation met with President Saddam Husayn during this visit.

According to some accounts, it is said that the delegation familiarized itself with the testimony of the five main leaders of the plot in which these leaders said that they had been in contact with Syrian persons, whose names were spelled out, and described how these persons had been contacted, the dates of the contacts, the sums they had received from these persons and the manner in which these sums had been distributed.

Khaddam denied that the Syrian President, Government or agencies had any connection with this issue. At this point, according to the accounts, Saddam Husayn ordered that Muhyi 'Abd-al-Husayn Mashhadi be brought. Mashhadi said that Muhammad 'Ayish was the "link" with the Syrians, that the contact used to take place through a person from the Iraqi city of Mosul and through Ahmad Dhannun, whom Mashhadi described as an Iraqi refugee who has been living in Syria for years, who is a leading member in the [Ba'th Party] organization controlled by the Syrian regime and who had been sentenced to death in absentia. Mashhadi also said that the relationship with the Syrians dates back to 1975 and that in 1976 a Syrian called Colonel Husayn was entrusted with arranging the contact with Muhammad 'Ayish.

Muhyi 'Abd-al-Husayn went on to add that in the middle of the said year, a trilateral meeting including 'Ayish, 'Abd-al-Husayn and Colonel Husayn took place and that 'Ayish received from the said officer the sum of 30,000 dinars. At the outset of 1977, another Syrian, called Zafir, was entrusted with following up the (military organization) with Muhammad 'Ayish and delivered to 'Ayish the sum of 50,000 dinars.

The account goes on to say that 2 days before Saddam Husayn was elected president in the wake of President al-Bakr's relinquishment of his responsibilities, a meeting was held between Zafir and 'Ayish and Zafir was informed that Walid Sayrat (the military official of the plotters who has been convicted and executed) was proceeding according to the premeditated plan.

It is also said that the confessions that Khaddam and al-Shihabi heard from Mashhadi also dealt with the role performed by Ghanim 'Abd-al-Jalil, the former director of Saddam Husayn's office. Mashhadi said that Ghanim

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had sent regularly to a top-level Syrian group reports containing information on the state, the armed forces and Iraq's international relations and party reports on the organizations in Iraq and in the Arab homeland, as well as other reports. In short, Ghanim had been sending reports on whatever fell under his hands in his sensitive position.

The account also says that it was also revealed to Khaddam that a meeting was said to have taken place between 'Ayish and President al-Asad during the former's visit to Syria as a member of a delegation led by 'Adnan Husayn and that 'Ayish conveyed to al-Asad his colleagues' viewpoint. What was intended here was to stress to Khaddam that the Syrian role persisted after the unity charter between the two countries. This is what Khaddam tried to deny throughout the meeting with Saddam Husayn.

When it was said that 'Ayish conveyed to al-Asad at this meeting the details of the plan and that Walid Sayrat's view was that this particular moment--the moment of psychological instability--had to be chosen, provided that Syria send air force planes and paratroopers in Iraqi uniforms to help the plotters, Khaddam and al-Shihabi again denied that President Hafiz al-Asad had any direct or indirect connection with the issue.

The second visit of the Syrian minister of foreign affairs and of the chief of staff to Baghdad on the 29th of last July, only 4 days after the first visit, was no less difficult than the first visit. It is said that on his return to Damascus from the first visit, Khaddam carried in his briefcase a full recording of Muhyi 'Abd-al-Husayn's confessions.

'Izzat Ibrahim, the Iraqi Revolution Command Council deputy chairman, received Khaddam and al-Shihabi [on their second visit]. Khaddam started by denying completely, on behalf of the Syrian President, that President al-Asad had any connection with the plot and by casting doubts on Muhyi 'Abd-al-Husayn's confessions. But 'Izzat Ibrahim said: The detainees we have are not ordinary persons and not members of other political parties. They are five members of the leadership, along with a number of the party's cadres. These people cannot claim falsely that they have a relationship with Syria unless they have such a relationship.

'Izzat Ibrahim told Khaddam frankly: Despite what has happened, which is painful, our eagerness for the relations with Syria is bigger in view of the importance of these relations and the importance of the goals that these relations seek. This eagerness, which is mixed with pain, is what made the Iraqi leadership give thought to the manner in which to announce this plot because the people, the public opinion and the world want to know the truth and details of what has happened. Thus, the announcement issued on 28 July did in fact refrain from making any open reference to Syria and only mentioned "a foreign party."

When Khaddam and al-Shihabi wondered during their visit to Baghdad what interest Syria has in conspiring against Baghdad, they were told that

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Syria has definitely no interest in plotting against Iraq and that what was behind the plot was not Syria as a country, a people and a national interest but the intentions and ambitions of individuals whose unpatriotic and illegitimate will has met with the evil wills of individuals inside the Iraqi leadership.

This is the crux of the issue.

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IRAQ

STUDENT SUMMER CAMPS SAID IMPORTANT IN BUILDING NEW MAN

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic 31 Aug-5 Sep 79 pp 74-75

[Article: "'Jerusalem Is Ours' Camp, Unique Experiment in Preparing New Generation"]

[Text] Al-Rashidiyah--Iraq--The "Jerusalem Is Ours" Camp was concluded in Baghdad recently. This year, the camp was distinguished from the previous annual camps which started since 1973 by including 32,000 students who worked in shifts to build a workers village in al-Rashidiyah area which is located 12 kilometers north of the capital. This village includes 204 houses, a school and a health and social center.

AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI's correspondent in Baghdad conveys here the picture of this unique experiment.

They wake up at 0330 of each dawn and they continue to sacrifice and offer until 2000 on the same day and then continue with cultural and recreational activities that make them forget their exhaustion.

This is their day throughout a full week at the "Jerusalem Is Ours" Camp. They are then followed by other 4,000 male and female students who come in another group to carry out the same work until construction of the workers village in al-Rashidiyah is completed in a period of 6 weeks of ceaseless work.

These students, with their different ages, write during this period of every year stories that are bigger than all the words.

They are Iraqi and Arab students who have been carrying out since the summer of 1972 a new experiment in work and efforts to build the new man.

Above Personal Considerations

It is evident that the Iraqi political leadership attaches maximum importance to this work because of the push it gives the student movement to participate in the development operation.

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This importance has been reflected in the numerous visits that President Saddam Husayn has paid to the Camp site with a number of high-ranking Iraqi officials. Addressing the students during one of his visits, the president said in part: "This is a great experiment in which we start working before we are required to work after graduation. It is a unique experiment in human calculations that you sweat in your adolescence as the worker and the peasant sweat in the factory and in the farm."

President Saddam Husayn added: "Our actual awareness of the tasks of the sacred and fundamental duties begins when we work in the field in the manner in which you have worked--this manner which polishes the soul and even purifies it and makes man rise above the personal considerations to embrace the principles in their purity and in their most magnificent form of radiation and serenity. You are preparing yourselves and preparing your people with the living example that you give them to liberate Palestine and liberate Jerusalem.... We went to Jordan and we saw with our own eyes the lights of Jerusalem at night. It is certain that when speaking about Jerusalem and about Palestine, a man gets swept by emotions of a certain kind. But comrades, emotions alone are not enough to liberate Palestine and to liberate Jerusalem.

"This is why we are working and preparing ourselves in the economic, political, social, intellectual and military spheres to liberate Jerusalem and to liberate the entire soil of Palestine. On the basis of these concepts, we appreciate the high spirit that we have noticed in your conduct and in your concepts and we appreciate this high preparedness to sacrifice for this good earth so that we may prepare ourselves to wrench our usurped land, Palestine, from the talons of usurpation."

This Is Plan

The experiment is being implemented by the General Federation of Iraqi Students. The camp is supervised by eight persons who share the responsibilities of management, organization and guidance.

The Executive Office of the General Federation of Iraqi Students has gotten accustomed to inquiring of all the state agencies about the projects that they are implementing. The office then determines the priorities of work in any project and proceeds to invite students to participate voluntarily in the summer student experiments.

The Students Federation started these experiments by bringing in the broadest student base possible to participate in these works since 1973.

Green Carpet and Knights

The experiment of the "Jerusalem Is Ours" Camp which ended on the 22nd of this month is the sixth of its kind.

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The first student camp was held in 1973 under the name of Abu Munaysir. The task of this camp was to dig canals for the reclamation of vast areas of cultivable lands.

In 1974, there was al-Khalisah Camp which built a peasant village consisting of 100 houses.

In 1975, there was the experiment of al-Intisar Camp which paved roads and built warehouses for one of the public sector companies.

No camp was set up in 1976. However, the National Federation of Students sent a large number of students to work in factories with the aim of enabling them to have the experience of working alongside the workers in their installations.

In 1977, there was the Green Carpet experiment through which public parks were built and the capital's streets cleaned.

In 1978, two central experiments were carried out:

The experiment of "The Knights" Camp for the construction of 105 houses for peasants and "The Eagles" Camp for the construction of 75 houses. Most of these camps were located in the area of Baghdad whereas "The Eagles" Camp was conducted in Salah-al-Din Governorate in northern Iraq.

In all these experiments, the number of volunteer students has been increasing year after year until it reached in the "Jerusalem Is Ours" Camp this year to 32,000 students.

Two Hundred and Four Houses and Agricultural Project

The National Federation has been inclined for some time toward implementing works concerning the agricultural sector. The project to build the workers village in al-Rashidiyah area this year was proposed by the Higher Agricultural Council in Iraq.

Al-Rashidiyah is an area located 12 kilometers north of Baghdad, the capital, where a workers village consisting of 204 houses, in addition to a big agricultural project consisting of glass greenhouses for the production of vegetables out of season, are being built. The village houses will become the property of the workers employed at the agricultural project. In return, the worker pays nearly 2 dinars monthly out of his wages to al-Khalisah Agricultural Authority which owns the project. Each house consists of three rooms and their health conveniences. The student participation in the construction work takes the form of groups of students, each working for a period of one week. The groups are replaced one after the other until construction of the village, which also includes a school, a health center and a social center, is completed.

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Hand and Mind Together

Student Hisham Muhammad Tamir, the camp supervisor, says that "this experiment and others are not intended for construction or for digging canals in the conventional sense. Foremost among the experiment's goals is to build the student behaviorally and culturally. Thus, the experiment contributed toward the revolution's programs for building the new man. Our experiments in the summer camps provide the student with the opportunity to participate in the building and progress process experienced by the country since the inception of the 17 July revolution. The hard conditions under which the students live during the experiment get these students accustomed to sacrifice, self-denial and the love of collective work. The camps also underline the students' determination to realize the national goals for which the July revolution, led by the Socialist Arab Ba'th Party, is struggling."

Significance of Names

"Moreover, the names of the camps have their special significance. For example, al-Khalisah Camp reflected in its name the firm faith of the students in the armed struggle for the liberation of the Arab land of Palestine. The camp was given this name at the time when a Palestinian fedayeen group carried out the famous al-Khalisah operation.

"The name of the Knights [al-fursan] Camp reflects the students' pride in the genuine Arab values of chivalry and self-denial. 'Jerusalem Is Ours' represents a moral symbol of the Arab issue, Palestine. We believe that the building operation is directly connected with the liberation operation. The building operation contributes toward creating the preludes necessary for the liberation operation. This is what President Saddam Husayn stressed in one of his visits to the experiment site."

The working conditions in the camp are hard. The students work for long hours in the burning sun.

The food conditions are the same as those of the food of the soldier in the battlefield. The National Federation puts the students under these conditions intentionally because when the student goes through the experiment, he can live under completely and fully extraordinary conditions.

In an interview with the world press correspondents who visited the Camp site, Latif Nasif Jasim, the minister of culture and information, said: "The experiment with which you have familiarized yourselves is one of several experiments carried out by Iraq for the past 11 years. This work is not so much economic work as it is work to build the man and to bolster the collective spirit among the youth because the goal of building man is bigger for us than building factories and bigger than development and tops both in priority.

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"When a man carries out voluntary work, his spirit of compatriotism is strengthened and he rids himself of the spirit of selfishness, individualism and domination. Leader President Saddam Husayn has said: 'He who does not sweat to build his country will not bleed to defend it.'"

The minister added: "We begin with this work to reach other depths in man. This experiment is one of tens of experiments pertaining to the vitality, youth and [word indistinct] of our people."

"This is not the only sphere for building the youth. There is the experiment of the Popular Army and the Young Vanguard and there are other experiments concerning women. Thus you can see that after 11 years of the inception of its revolution, Iraq is living under a totally different picture, whether in terms of the social or the economic relations. The social and economic situation in Iraq has changed."

"We stress that this change must accompany and must be connected with the civilizational, cultural and historical continuity of the Arab nation. The change process underlines the moral and educational aspect so that we may build a special experience that stands fast in the face of all the imperialist and Zionist ambitions aimed against the Arab nation."

Workshop

The minister of information and culture added: "As you have seen, our country is living in a state of stability and prosperity. It has turned into a workshop, from the north to the south. The big financial allocations made for development will contribute toward placing Iraq in an excellent position as a result of its special experience. We stress, as you know, the particularity of experience. This is a legitimate right. Our experience is an Arab experience inside Iraq. We build it while making use of the scientific developments in the world."

"We are not concerned with the view of surprise with which the outside world considers us. A revolution like the July revolution stands against imperialism and supports the liberation movements. It is clearly independent and it is building an enormous edifice. Its positions toward the number one Arab issue, namely the Palestine issue, are well-known. It is natural that such a revolution would be attacked by the imperialist forces. They are trying to distort our reputation. But we have numerous friends, including you. Conveying the truth is a big moral work. We always view with respect and admiration those who convey the truth."

"When we speak about stability, we speak while living under it. You have felt this stability in what you have seen and in the broad popular support given to the revolution. I will say that the July revolution has received such broad popular support and backing that no other revolution in the world has received, keeping in mind that we are not underrating the importance of the other revolutions. But this is the fact. [We have moved] from a crushed position to an advanced and bright position."

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One Family

"This is what the revolution has done: Free education, free health care and services, greatly increased purchase capability and woman's decisive entry into the field of work. All these things have made the Iraqis live like a single family.

"In our Arab position, we view the central issue, namely the Palestine issue, with great interest. Our position is declared and firm, namely the repatriation of all the Palestinians and their right to self-determination. This is our firm position."

Arabs Are Builders of Civilization

The minister added: "The Arabs are not against civilization. Throughout history, the Arabs have contributed toward building the human civilization and have given the world bright examples. Our civilization is deep-rooted and it had its impact on almost all the continents. We are working to master science and to use technology so that we may reach the stage of development and progress that the world has reached. We have no problems. We are a harmonious people and we do not look at the minorities in a racial manner. All are called the Iraqi people. We do not view religions fanatically. All are equal in rights and responsibilities. We only ask about man's work. These are our values and in the light of these yardsticks we must evaluate the experiment of the 'Jerusalem Is Ours' Camp."

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LIBYA

BRIEFS

BENGHAZI CEMENT PLANT--Mitsubishi of Japan will build a cement plant 300 kilometers from Benghazi. The cost is put at 200 million dollars. By 1982, the plant is to be producing 1 million tons of cement annually. [Text]
[Paris VALEURS ACTUELLES in French 24 Sep 79 p 68]

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SUDAN

OPPOSITION TO CURRENT REGIME ASSESSED

Paris JEUNE AFRIQUE in French 12 Sep 79 pp 40, 41

[Article by Samir Gharbi: "What is Left for Numayri?"--passages in slantlines published in italics]

[Text] In accusing his own regime of being the cause of all of Sudan's problems, Ja'afar Numayri strengthened the opposition in his country.

President Ja'afar Numayri pulled off a real tour de force: that of accusing his own regime of being the cause of all the problems that afflict the Sudan, without, at the same time, accusing himself.... Thanks to that he is starting his 11th year in power and is carrying out a tremendous purge (JEUNE AFRIQUE No 973): in the government, his first vice president and comrade in arms, Abu al-Qasim Muhammad Ibrahim, 8 of his ministers in the one-party system, the Sudanese Socialist Union, 10 members of the political branch, and 11 secretaries, have become its victims. They have not been replaced.

What is left for the Sudanese president? In the first place: the army, which inherits the post from the first vice president through the appointment of a "pure one" (meaning a nonpolitical military man) in the person of Gen Abd al-Majid Khalil. In the second place is Egypt, a lifelong ally. To that is added the financial and moral support of Saudi Arabia and the West, in particular, that of the United States. In the middle of the upheaval, on 18 August, the U.S. charge d'affaires in Khartoum gave Numayri a message from President Carter. A few days later, Numayri goes to Riyadh. The Americans and the Saudis are then afraid that the Sudanese excitement would facilitate the settlement of a revolutionary government on the banks of the Red Sea and north of Ethiopia.

But at home, the Sudanese president revived the opposition. With the official dismissal of Sadiq al-Mahdi, leader of the Ansars, he put an end to his own attempt at "national reconciliation" which was supposed to

assemble, within the single party, all the movements of the opposition, the left as well as the right, who agree to put an end to the violent struggle for power.

Thus "liberated," will Sadiq al-Mahdi be able to gather around him his former party "Oumma" (National) whose rank and file rural and Moslem, has never wholeheartedly accepted the alliance with Numayri. It is quite possible. What is not possible is a return to armed opposition, as Sadiq al-Mahdi asserted when he was already at odds with the regime. Clearly, this means to abandon the idea of a coup d'etat. In his Omdurman residence he said to us: /"Bloody battles lead to instability, and hence to the impoverishment of the nation, and to foreign intervention."/ In favor of unity of the political organization, Al-Mahdi insists on the revision of the constitution /"along democratic lines"/ and defends an economic and social system based on Islam, /"the prime source of thought."/ It is on this basis, he maintains, that he became friendly again with Numayri in 1977. What will he do then? Maybe look for a new compromise with Numayri who could offer him the office of prime minister, a possibility much discussed in Khartoum. For a new alliance with Sharif al-Hindi, leader in exile of the Unionist Party, is apparently ruled out. Today, the latter has hardened his position toward Sadiq al-Mahdi whom he considers definitely involved with Numayri's regime.

From now on, his only objective is to overthrow this government. Though he may not exclude a military intervention by Egypt (actually a defense pact binds the two countries), the exiled man in London boasts that he also has friends on the outside. The political color of Al-Hindi changes like that of a chameleon. Former ally of Sadiq al-Mahdi, he opposed the "national reconciliation" and then ended up uniting the movement in April 1978, declaring in London: /"We hope a new dawn is coming."/ But his return to Khartoum, officially announced, never took place. Today he enjoys the favor of Libya and Iraq, with whom the Sudan has just severed diplomatic relations. But in the country, Al-Hindi does not seem to have a large audience. However, he remains a strong personality, marked by voluntary exile and intrigue.

What Numayri's government can actually fear is not the individual weight of its opponents, but the formation of a "Sudanese Progressive Front" announced 17 August in Beyrouth. Is this the front we were told about at the beginning of the year in Khartoum, by a member of the Central Committee of the Sudanese Communist Party, Fatima Ahmad Ibrahim? Accused by Numayri of being at the source of the 8 August riots, the communists, who would benefit from Ethiopian support, are again at the forefront of the political scene in the Sudan, 8 years after the destruction of their organization and following an abortive putsch. Founded in 1946, the PCS [Sudanese Communist Party] reached its zenith at the end of the sixties. It even contributed to Numayri taking power, and took part in his government until 1971. In Africa, it was the most powerful and the best organized communist party.

Known best by her first name, Fatima, a communist strongly affected by the execution of her husband, a former leader of the PCS, she still keeps her vigor, her humor, and her self-assurance. We met her in Khartoum. /"I am released on probation,"/ she said. /"We communists, we act in secret. Our aim is to save the country from economic collapse and to establish freedom and socialism. For that reason we formed with others a 'front for democracy and the safety of the nation'."/ All those whose aim is to change the present regime can join, while preserving their own personality and independence. It is a "transitory cooperation whose primary goal is to bring about the fall of Numayri." How? By means of a popular revolution. The communists will not be able to govern alone. That is why a democratic alliance is needed. /"In spite of the outside support of Egypt and especially of the United States, the Numayri regime is isolated. It did not succeed. As you see, Numayri himself accuses his political organization of incompetence. We want to change the government. But if people are not aware of this, then there will be no change.

In fact, during this month of August when popular dissatisfaction reached its height, some think that Numayri's end is near. This career army man, 49 years old today, has proved that he is a difficult man to knock down. He has survived three serious coups d'etat. In every case of tension, and that of the month of August was the most serious one, he knew how to maneuver adroitly and take advantage of the diversity of political forces, tribal and regional, which exist in a country as big as the Sudan. This time, in order to defuse a coup, he is offering a number of scapegoats to the people, who are exasperated by the black market, the corruption, the long lines in front of stores or at gasoline pumps. He reduces certain prices, raises salaries, and supplies the markets with meat meant for export. He promises to reorganize the structure of the party, the government, and the administration. This would not happen without limiting the absolute powers of the president of the republic which make him master of the executive and the legislative branches.

This is the objective of Dr Hasan al-Turabi, leader of the Moslem Brotherhood. Last February, when he was an official in the single party, he firmly stated his wish to /"cooperate with the government in order to correct it from within."/ Today, promoted to the positions of state prosecutor and minister of justice, could this 47-year-old lawyer, by himself, convince Numayri to reduce his powers and to increase those of the government and above all those of the assembly? For Numayri, faced by enemies who surround him, this is, perhaps, the last hope.

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WESTERN SAHARA

ESCALATION OF SAHARAN WAR VIEWED AS MORE CERTAIN

Madrid CAMBIO 16 in Spanish 2 Sep 79 pp 43-44

[Text] Hassan II has promised to go to war to defend the new annexation of what was formerly the Mauritanian Sahara. Meanwhile, Morocco's diplomatic isolation is growing and the conflict is draining its economy, while there are reliable reports of growing unrest within the Moroccan armed forces.

The 200 journalists who arrived by special invitation from all over the world had already endured countless, exhausting security and identification procedures. After going past walls and gardens, they arrived at the huge gate through the last jasmine-covered wall before gaining access to the inner enclosure of the Moroccan king's palace in Fez. They still had to undergo a thorough frisking. The doors opened, revealing the splendid park and a vast palace.

In a profusely but exquisitely decorated courtyard, the full government and the military high command flanked a red armchair with the royal seal and two chairs in which sat the king's heir and the king's brother. The television lights made the oppressiveness of the climate of the imperial city of Fez even worse. The exotic and ancient nature of the city harmonized with the atmosphere of unreality which permeated the entire ceremony. The royal guard intoned a sharp and quivering litany. Hassan II was arriving.

The staging was perfect. The king was sparing no pomp or pageantry as he presented himself before world public opinion. There was certainly reason enough for explanations: following the agreement between Mauritania and the POLISARIO Front putting an end to the hostilities on the southern strip (Tiris el Garbia) of the Sahara, Morocco had been quick to occupy the area and annex it as its 40th province. From Morocco, special correspondent for CAMBIO 16 Juan Carlos Alganaraz reporting.

Will war break out with Algeria? "I will be able to answer that quite accurately in a month or a month and a half at the latest," Hassan II

answered. This dramatic deadline, which is as much a truce as an ultimatum, served as a framework for the other statements made by the king, who was also emphatic about the limits of his capacity for negotiation: he is prepared to "go the limit" to defend the new province of Rio de Oro (Oued ed Dahab).

According to the king, the fact that Mauritania abandoned Tiris el Garbia was justification for Morocco to recover a territory it considers to be its own and had ceded only in order to facilitate the 1975 Madrid agreements. Actually, neither the Saharan people nor the POLISARIO Front exist for the Moroccan king. The matter only involves a confrontation with Algeria, which is using the conflict in the Sahara to try to establish hegemony over the Magreb and to gain an outlet to the Atlantic.

Although Hassan II carefully avoided making any threats against Algeria, he was quick to explain that Libya would be behind any possible warlike initiative by Algiers, and that Libya is ready to turn over its vast armored arsenals and its airplanes to strengthen the Algerian armed forces. "We are ready to accept any mediation," the king said. But it became increasingly clear during the press conference, which lasted 1 and 1/2 hours, that Morocco has already made its move and that the initiatives are now up to its adversaries.

Mauritania was harshly included in the latter category. The king described that country as "an artificial creation of the old colonial powers." He also explained that Mauritania has not managed to overcome the ethnic and tribal conflicts between the moors in the north, who lean toward the Saharan and Moroccan population, and the blacks in the south, who lean toward Senegal and the central nomadic tribes.

Another blow: Hassan II identified most members of the POLISARIO Front as coming primarily from Mauritania, and the rest as being "Moroccan bandits." Up until now Morocco had described most of the fighters of the POLISARIO Front as coming from Algeria.

All of these statements were leading up to the final explanation: in any foreseeable warlike action by the POLISARIO Front against Rio de Oro, Morocco will exercise the "right of persecution" if its forces act or take refuge on Mauritanian territory. Furthermore, Morocco will be obliged to "defend" Mauritania if the latter should be attacked by Algeria or Libya.

The political leeway provided in King Hassan II's declaration is sufficient to reveal that Morocco is not giving up its old hope of extending its borders to the Senegal River. Throughout the press conference the king painted a broad geopolitical picture which would be affected by any change in the balance of power in the Magreb. For example, he noted that the Canary Islands are very close to Mauritania, and that control of the latter by Algeria or Libya would directly affect Spain.

The king's intention was obviously to issue a thinly veiled warning to Europe and the United States to the effect that only Morocco can guarantee them

stability in the Magreb in the face of an offensive by Algeria and Libya, which are ready to exercise a hegemony that would have the backing of the Soviet Union.

Actually, what King Hassan II was trying to do in setting forth this scenario of conflict was to overcome the overwhelming diplomatic isolation in which Morocco finds itself. So far, it has not been able to get the United States to provide it with the armament it so desperately needs to continue the war in the Sahara. Washington has repeatedly told Morocco that it must put an end to the hostilities, and it is no secret that the State Department thinks it will be very difficult for Morocco to emerge victorious from the spiraling drain on its economy as a result of a war which eats up between \$2 and \$3 million a day.

King Hassan II also finds himself virtually isolated in Africa following the emphatic statement by the OAU conference in Monrovia in favor of the POLISARIO Front. In addition, the UN Decolonization Committee has leaned in favor of the Saharan cause.

To this distressing picture was added the statement by Spanish Foreign Minister Marcelino Oreja recognizing the POLISARIO Front as the sole legitimate representative of the struggling Saharan people. Spain also repeated that the Madrid agreements did not grant sovereignty rights to Morocco and Mauritania and that neither country has abided by the commitment to hold a referendum by means of which the Saharan people could decide their national destiny.

Morocco's official reaction to all of these international denunciations has been to beat the drum of xenophobia in a press which has gone so far as to make reference to the "jihad," or holy war, in defending the annexation in the Sahara. According to the King, the OAU is a "sewer", and the Monrovia meeting was a "clap-trap conference" at which the generous distribution of bribes made it possible to approve the declaration in favor of the POLISARIO Front. As for the statements by the Spanish foreign minister, the newspaper MAROC SOIR, an unofficial mouthpiece for the government, termed them "scandalous and hypocritical." Hassan II also repeated that Morocco will assert its claim to Ceuta and Melilla when Spain recovers Gibraltar, a statement which subsequently drew a cry of protest and indignation from Spanish political parties.

Morocco's diplomatic isolation underscores the danger of an escalation of hostilities in the Sahara which could precipitate a major crisis throughout the entire Magreb. Moroccan military force is centered on the defense of Morocco's few major cities, which have been turned into firm strongholds. Throughout the rest of the vast desert the POLISARIO Front deploys its forces without encountering much opposition.

The situation has degenerated and now the POLISARIO Front has vast resources at its disposal provided by Algeria, Libya and an ever-growing number of countries, as shown by the Monrovia resolution.

Thus, the war has become an indicator of the internal political situation in Morocco.

All political parties, including the leftist parties, endorse the policies of Hassan II and his government. But it is obvious that this national cause also represents the life or death of the Alaouite dynasty. A defeat could put an end to 300 years of monarchy.

That is why the journalists who were getting ready to attend the king's press conference were thunderstruck by reports in THE WASHINGTON POST to the effect that U.S. intelligence services had uncovered the possibility of a military coup d'etat against Hassan II in view of the fact that no final solution has been reached in the Sahara.

The current Moroccan political regime is fashioned along the lines of a precarious democracy in which all topics of debate are carefully chosen so as not to provoke a crisis which would take the country back to the dictatorial methods prevalent a decade ago.

These prospects lent a dramatic quality to the scene from the Arabian Nights in which Hassan II received the journalists from all over the world. Deprived of U.S. aid, there is very little the king can offer at the negotiations table without betraying the national cause which gave rise to the "Marcha Verde" [Green March], which has stained the war with the POLISARIO Front with blood, and which has now reached its climax with the annexation of Rio de Oro. The possibility that hostilities will escalate is now more certain.

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